

I completely disagree with the position of the NCVEC in their petition to eliminate the Morse Code requirement, Element 1. Morse Code is a part of amateur radio, and everyone should be exposed to it. If someone chooses not to continue with Morse Code after earning their general license and passing the simple 5 wpm code exam, that would be their choice. If I were not required to learn Morse Code and pass the 5 wpm exam, I probably would not have even tried it after getting my General. Once learned, it becomes a skill, something valuable that I am glad I have acquired. In fact, I am addicted to it. CW is truly more challenging and satisfying than just talking into a microphone or chatting on a keyboard. Anyone who wants to get into ham radio should be required to jump this hurdle, and thus be exposed to the fun and utility of Morse Code.

I think it would be a sad day for amateur radio if the Code requirement is dropped.

I have read the petition filed by FISTS on August 22, 2003, and I totally agree with all points in the FISTS petition.

Not only should the 5 wpm requirement be retained, I also strongly feel that the code requirement should be increased to 13 - 15 wpm for anyone wanting to earn the Extra License.

In my brief readings of the history of Amateur Radio and the Morse Code, the code is essential to the purpose and reason for existence of Amateur Radio. I need not go into the exact points already given by FISTS, but the FISTS petition reflects my opinion exactly.

I certainly hope that whomever makes this decision does not simply fall into lockstep with the other countries who gave up a valuable heritage by abandoning the code requirement for HF licensing. The United States and the FCC should be a shining example of independence by retaining the Morse Code requirement as part of Amateur Radio.

Thank you for considering my brief comment.